

Message Text

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UNCLAS SAN SALVADOR 4314

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EO 11652: NA

NOTES ON PRESIDENT'S ROMERO PRESS CONFERENCE ON SEPTEMBER
12, 1977

CLOSE TO FIFTY LOCAL MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES ATTENDED PRESIDENT ROMERO'S PESS CONFERENCE ON MONDAY, SEPT. 12. VICE PRESIDENT ASTACIO AND COL. FLORES LIMA, SECRETARY OF INFORMATION OF THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE ACCOMPANIED ROMERO. PRESIDENT ROMERO GAVE A DETAILED REPORT OF HIS VISIT TO WASHINGTON AND OF HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH PRESIDENT CARTER, WHICH WERE GIVEN TOP COVERAGE BY LOCAL NEWSPAPERS.

FOLLOWING ARE THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PRESS CONFERENCE:
PRESIDENT ROMERO SAID HE WELCOMED THE OPPORTUNITY OF MEETING AND TALKING WITH OTHER LATIN AMERICAN PRESIDENTS. HOWEVER, HE BELIEVES THAT PRESIDENT CARTER'S INTENTION WAS TO HAVE THEM WITNESS THE SIGNING OF A TREATY WHICH IS MOST IMPORTANT FOR BOTH COUNTRIES INVOLVED, BUT ESPECIALLY FOR PANAMA.
REGARDING THE HUMAN RIGHTS QUESOION WHICH HE DISCUSSED WITH PRESIDENT CARTER, HE REMINDED THE MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES THAT IT WAS DR. RAFAEL URQUIA, EL SALVADOR'S AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED NATIONS, WHO FORMULATED THE FIRST DOCUMENT ON HUMAN RIGHTS SUBMITTED TO THE UNITED NATIONS IN 1958.
HIS GOVERNMENT'S PROGRAM INCLUDES MEASURES TO CURTAIL UNCLASSIFIED

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POPULATION GROWTH, AND THIS IS BEING IMPLEMENTED THROUGH THE NATIONAL DEMOGRAPHIC OFFICE.
HEALTH, HOUSING--BOTH URBAN AND RURAL--AND NUTRITION, ESPECIALLY IN THE RURAL AREAS, WILL BE SUBSTANTIALLY IMPOROVED FOR THE MAJORITY OF SALVADORANS. MEASURES ARE BEING IMPLEMENTED IN THESE FIELDS THROUGH THE CORRESPONDING MINISTRIES.
ON ITERNAL AND EXTERNAL MIGRATION, A REDISTRIBUTION OF THE

POPULATION BASED ON THE COUNTRY'S RESOURCES WILL BE IMPLEMENTED. PRESIDENT ROMERO SAID THAT HE SPOKE WITH PRESIDENT CARTER ABOUT THE NEED TO OBTAIN INTERNATIONAL TECHNICAL, FINANCIAL, AND MORAL SUPPORT, CREATING A "BRIDGE" THAT MAY ENABLE SALVADORANS TO EMIGRATE IN AN ORDERLY MANNER AND BE ALLOWED TO WORK LEGALLY IN OTHER COUNTRIES. HE EMPHASIZED THAT ON THIS MATTER EL SALVADOR NEEDS INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION. PRESIDENT ROMERO FURTHER STATED THAT HE HAD REQUESTED PRESIDENT CARTER TO CONSIDER GRANTING PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT FOR SALVADORANS TO ENTER THE UNITED STATES, REMINDING HIM THAT OTHER COUNTRIES HAD BEEN ALLOWED QUOTAS. HE SAID PRESIDENT CARTER REPLIED THAT HIS REQUEST WOULD BE STUDIED AND THAT ASSISTANCE WOULD BE GIVEN IN SOLVING THE PROBLEM. REGARDING THE TREATY WITH HONDURAS, PRESIDENT ROMERO INFORMED THAT MR. CARTER SEEMED VERY PLEASED WITH THE RATIFICATION OF THE "MEDIATION AGREEMENT" BY THE SALVADORAN GOVERNMENT AND EXPRESSED THAT THIS WAS A POSITIVE WAY TO SHOW THAT EL SALVADOR WAS WILLING TO SOLVE THE "SMALL PROBLEMS" STILL PENDING WITH HONDURAS. AN EARLY DATE WILL BE SET FOR A MEETING BETWEEN ROMERO AND MELGAR TO TAKE CONCRETE STEPS WHICH MAY LEAD TO PERMANENT PEACE. GOING BACK TO THE HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTION, PRESIDENT ROMERO ANNOUNCED THAT HE HAD REQUESTED THAT A COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS VISIT EL SALVADOR TO EITHER CONFIRM OR DENY WHAT IS BEING SAID IN OTHER COUNTRIES ABOUT EL SALVADOR. HE STATED THAT MEMBERS OF THIS COMMITTEE WOULD BE GIVEN COMPLETE UNCLASSIFIED

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FREEDOM TO VISIT ANY PLACE OR TALK WITH ANYONE THEY WISH INCLUDING RELATIVES OF ALLEGEDLY MISSING PERSONS. PRESIDENT ROMERO SEEMED VERY PLEASED WITH PRESIDENT CARTER'S STATEMENT THAT THIS WAS A VERY POSITIVE STEP AND THAT MOST COUNTRIES HAD SHIED AWAY FROM SUCH COMMITTEES. PRESIDENT ROMERO FELT THAT HIS VISIT TO WASHINGTON HAD BEEN VERY FRUITFUL. (IT WAS EVIDENT THAT ROMERO FELT VERY PROUD AND PLEASED ABOUT HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH PRESIDENT CARTER). ONE OF THE POINTS HE EMPHASIZED IS THAT NOT ONLY WAS HE ABLE TO TALK WITH LATIN AMERICAN PRESIDENTS--SOME OF WHOM HE HAD NEVER MET--BUT ALSO TO HIGH OFFICIALS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND OTHER AGENCIES OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT WHO ACCOMPANIED THEM THROUGHOUT THEIR VISIT. PRESIDENT ROMERO FEELS THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN EL SALVADOR AND THE UNITED STATES, WHICH "WERE NEVER BROKEN", HE EMPHASIZED, BUT ONLY "PERTURBED", WERE NOW GETTING BACK TO NORMAL, AS PROVEN BY THE NOMINATION OF AMBASSADOR DEVINE TO EL SALVADOR, WITH WHOM HE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO TALK IN WASHINGTON. ROMERO FEELS THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES HAVE BEEN SUBSTANTIALLY IMPROVED THROUGH RECENT CONVERSATIONS WITH THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES AND NEW OFFICIALS OF THE EMBASSY IN EL SALVADOR AND BELIEVES THAT AMBASSADOR DEVINE IS AN EXPERIENCED MAN WHO KNOWS

"WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN HE COMES TO THIS COUNTRY."

IN ANSWER TO A REPORTER'S QUESTION, PRESIDENT ROMERO SAID ONE OF THE MAIN REASONS WHY HE DECIDED TO TRAVEL TO WASHINGTON WAS TO IMPROVED EL SALVADOR'S IMAGE, AND THAT THIS TYPE OF PUBLICITY WOULD CONTINUE IN ORDER TO PROJECT HIS ADMINISTRATION'S POLICIES.

AS A FINAL POINT, HE SAID "HE HAD SPOKEN TO PRESIDENT CARTER ABOUT INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS STRANGLING COUNTRIES IN NEED THROUGH RESTRICTIVE MEASURES IN ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE." "PRESIDENT CARTER," HE SAID, "STATED HE WOULD GIVE HIS SUPPORT IN THIS REGARD TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES."

IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION FROM LA CONICA WHETHER HE WOULD OPEN PRISONS FOR POLITICAL PRISONERS AND SEND THEM TO COURTS, PRESIDENT ROMERO SAID HE HAD GIVEN INSTRUCTIONS TO APPROPRIATE UNCLASSIFIED

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AUTHORITIES THAT ALL PERSONS ARRESTED FOR WHATEVER REASON, BE REMITTED TO ORDINARY COURTS IMMEDIATELY."

THIS PRESS CONFERENCE WAS TELECAST AT 8PM ON SEPTM 12 THROUGH CHANNEL 6, USING AS BACKGROUND THE VIDEO TAPE OF THE SIGHING CEREMONY IN WASHINGTON.

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TAGS: SOPN, PDIP, PQ, ES, (ROMERO MENA, CARLOS HUMBERTO)
To: USIA
Type: TE
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